

Press release – 30.11.2018

For a true law on the control of tobacco products

The current version of the Federal Act on Tobacco Products, to be voted on soon by the Parliament, puts profits for tobacco companies before the liberties and health of the Swiss population. Should the Federal Assembly serve the interests of tobacco lobbies before those of Swiss people?

Situation

After rejection by the Federal Assembly of a first draft Federal Act on Tobacco Products (ATP), and following a consultation procedure initiated at the end of 2017, the Federal Council has submitted today to Parliament a new draft law on tobacco products (ATP). During the consultation, 1237 positions were submitted to the Federal Administration. The SSPH+, the Swiss Academies of Sciences, academic institutes, hospitals and medical associations, including as more than 300 professors of medicine, law and public health, as well as doctors and scientists from all over Switzerland rejected this draft law. However, once again, the population and scientific arguments seem to have been sacrificed to the interests of the tobacco industry.

The new version of the AP-LPTab is unacceptable and dangerous for many reasons.

- The children and the youth are denied the protection they deserve. As more than half of all smokers started when they were less than 18, this is hurting the interests and health of all generations.
- The health of individuals and the interests and freedoms of people are sacrificed to the interests of the tobacco lobbies, in total contradiction with universally recognized scientific evidence and with no transparency on the weighing of interests.
- The well-being and health of citizens is not considered, including the freedom of those wanting to quit – more than half of all smokers – and those who do not want to breath second hand smoke.
- It does not take into account the enormous costs that tobacco creates for our health-care system. The direct costs of tobacco for the sickness funds reach 1.5 billion francs a year or more than half of what the sickness funds intend to save by checking all the bills from the insurers (or 600 millions a year).
- It does not respect the opinion and will of the people. 58% of Swiss people are in favor of a general ban on tobacco advertising.
- It takes Switzerland away from ratifying the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control - the international standard for tobacco control ratified by 168 countries.

The SSPH+ urges the Parliament not to fall in the trap of the tobacco lobby and to adopt a law truly in favor of the well-being and health of the Swiss population and respecting the will and liberties of its citizens. The Parliament must revise the draft ATP so that the goal of prioritizing the interest of the population and protecting the health of the population (particularly our children and youth), is respected, prioritized and achieved. SSPH+ also demands for a fully transparent process for the sake of the population.

The position of SSPH+ is supported by the Swiss Academies of Sciences (a+), many medical faculties, university institutes, hospitals and medical associations as well as more than 300 professors, doctors and scientists specialized in public health from everywhere in Switzerland, as well as by Thomas Zeltner, Chair of the Board of the sickness fund KPT/CPT, Thomas Czucs, Chair of the Board of the sickness fund Helsana, and Felix Gutzwiller, Chair of the Foundation Sanitas.

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